



## Best Voice Recorder Ever

### Review By Denny Atkin

Admobis' [ProRecord Digital Voice Recorder](#) is one of those rare products that gets just about everything right. This Springboard module for Handspring Visors is compact, has an excellent set of controls, and it offers the best integration of voice with organizer data we've ever seen.

Where previous Springboard recorders have offered limited voice storage, ProRecord holds an amazing 8.5 hours of audio. That might even seem excessive, but it's not when you consider the approach Admobis has taken to storing the recordings. Instead of emulating an electronic tape recorder, the ProRecord module ties recordings to voice-enhanced versions of the standard Palm OS Address, Date, Memo, and To Do modules. This allows you to add voice annotations to your standard PIM data.

To record a note, you can tap an icon in any of the PIM applications, but there's an easier way. Just hold down the jog wheel at the top of the Springboard and the Visor will launch the Memo Pad application, create a new memo, and start recording. If you have one of the other PIM applications loaded, holding down the wheel will create a new entry in that app. When you don't have the time, or a both hands free, to write an entry in Graffiti, just use ProRecord to store the data temporarily as a voice entry, and scribble it in later.

The audio from the module's built-in microphone won't win any awards for clarity--there's a little bit of background scratchiness--but we had no problem understanding voices recorded from across the room.

Playback is much better using the included earbud headphones than the tiny speaker mounted on the Springboard. When playing an entry, the jog wheel lets you quickly fast forward and rewind, a very handy feature when transcribing a conversation.



You can upload your recording to a Windows PC (no Mac support, alas). The files are stored in a custom .PRV format, but they can be transferred to Windows Media Player and saved in standard WAV format. You can copy ProRecord voice files from your PC back to your Visor, but there's no WAV-to-PRV converter, so you can't convert PC voice files for Visor playback.

If you're using Windows XP, be sure to download the ProRecord 1.4 software update, which adds XP support and improves recording quality. Note that you must use Handspring's HotSync manager. If

you've installed a Palm or Sony version to accommodate a Palm OS 4 device, audio transfers won't work.

The ProRecord packaging and quick-start manual read like they were written by someone for whom English is a second language. So it's a pleasant surprise to read the PDF manual on the installation CD and discover that, while the writing's a bit quirky (the author seems to have cut most instances of the word "the" to save space), it thoroughly and effectively explains all of the device's functions.

In addition to the 16MB of memory used for voice recording, the ProRecord module offers 1.4MB of storage for Palm OS applications--a nice bonus for what's already a superb product.

### Review Fossil Wrist PDA

\$145. [Fossil](#)

The Fossil Wrist PDA duplicates the functionality of the core Palm OS organizer applications. It can store up to 1,100 contacts, 800 appointments, 350 400-character memos, and 5,000 to do entries. You get the data from your handheld into the Wrist PDA through infrared beaming--they can't be created directly on the watch. You can also beam and receive business cards--up to 20 can be stored on the Wrist PDA and beamed back to your handheld.

You navigate the built-in apps using a four-way directional pad and a pair of navigation buttons. The apps are easy to use, and the Wrist PDA supports categories to make lookups quicker. And

of course, the watch supports appointment alarms and typical watch timekeeping functions.

While the Wrist PDA works well, it has one major flaw--it's huge compared to a typical watch. The case size is 44x15x15mm; it's the thickness that really stands out. If you're replacing a calculator watch with the Wrist PDA, you probably won't mind the size and appearance. But if fashion is a concern, you may find the size gives this device too high a geek factor to wear. Also, the two CR2032 coin batteries last just 1.5 to 3 months, great for a PDA but extremely short for a watch. --DA



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### News

#### Bejeweled Birthday: Everyone Gets a Present

To the first anniversary of the release of the amazingly successful and devilishly addictive Bejeweled, Astraware is hosting an online celebration at [www.astraware.com](#). Visitors will have the opportunity to register for prizes, including free games and Astraware t-shirts and mugs. Other prizes include Palm m130 and m125 handhelds, both donated by Palm, Inc.; a Sony NR70V handheld donated by Sony; clip-on GameFace joysticks donated by Handspring; and software donated by many of the top Palm OS developers. To sweeten the pot, Astraware is guaranteeing that everyone who enters the contest will win a prize.

#### We Need Your Horror Stories

We're working on an article on troubleshooting the most frustrating handheld hardware and software problems. We'd like to hear about your weirdest problems and both horror stories and success stories with various companies' tech support. Email them to [rick@hhmgroup.com](#) and they may appear in an upcoming issue.

### New Products

#### Math Class

[Math Class](#) builds your kids' addition, subtraction, division and multiplication skills. The program combines a timer and sound with math problems to provide a fun challenge for kids. The application was built by a Palm OS developer who also happens to be a dad, and it shows in both the professional design and the kid-friendly interface.

#### NR70V Applications

You have one of Sony's hot new convertible Clie NR70V models on order, and you're anxious to start collecting software that supports its hi-res screen. [ScreenShot](#) from LinkeSoft, is the hack we use to grab images for Handheld Computing. The newest version supports the NR70 series screen... [Iambic](#) has added hi-res support to Action Names Datebook and Bump Attack Pinball... There are also new launchers, email applications, and picture viewers that support the NR70 series available on the Yahoo Groups [nXt Clie Club](#).

